

Dec 26, 2024
Shalah Turner, MPA
1520 N. Memorial Way Apt 133
Houston, TX 77007

Greetings Judge Calibrese:

I am writing to offer my full support for Basheer Jones. I have had the privilege of knowing Basheer for over 15 years, and during that time, I have seen him transform from someone I knew of through community work to a personal advocate for me during one of the most challenging periods of my life. His unwavering dedication to helping others has inspired me to pay it forward by supporting countless young adults in return, a testament to the ripple effect of his kindness.

As a Cleveland native, I have long been familiar with Basheer's name as a constant voice for those in our communities who are often overlooked. While you will undoubtedly hear countless stories of his public impact, I want to share a moment that may have gone unnoticed but speaks volumes about his character.

During my senior year at Lake Erie College in Painesville, I faced a devastating setback. My merit-based scholarships were suddenly stripped, and just one week before classes began, I was informed of an outstanding balance that I could not afford. At the time, I was participating in community events in Cleveland, and I shared with Basheer that I would need to step back. He didn't know me beyond passing interactions, but his response was immediate and heartfelt: he said he would pray for me.

A few days later, he called and insisted that I attend an event. To my surprise, there was no event, no cameras, no crowd—just Basheer and a woman I later learned was a nonprofit owner who donated to causes like mine. Without my knowledge, Basheer had reached out on my behalf and found someone willing to help. That woman handed me a check that covered my school balance. Basheer looked at me and said words I will never forget: "Finish so you can come back and help someone else finish." Even as I write this, 15 years later, the memory still brings tears to my eyes.

I had no family support at the time, and these two strangers—brought together by Basheer's quiet advocacy—helped me without asking for anything in return. That moment has shaped my life's mission. Today, I am an active member of the community, advocating for incarcerated youth, running a full-time business, and serving on several community boards. Basheer has never once brought up that moment or sought recognition for what he did. His silent acts of service are routine, and they exemplify the true power of community.

Many of us see the work Basheer does publicly, but I hope this letter gives you insight into his actions when no one is watching. His character has not only made a lasting impact on me but also created space for servant leaders like myself to thrive. I could share countless stories like mine, but this one encapsulates the truth of who Basheer Jones is: a man who lifts others up without hesitation or expectation.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my perspective. I urge you to reflect on the invaluable role Basheer plays in our community and the countless lives he has touched, including mine, as you make your decision.

Thank you,
Shalah Turner

sturner@consultconsciously.com

(713) 882-1710